UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/C.2/51/L.15/Rev.1
27 November 1996

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifty-first session
SECOND COMMITTEE
Agenda item 96 (e)

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Mohammad Reza Hadji Karim Djabbary (Islamic Republic of Iran), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/51/L.15

Implementation of the decisions adopted by the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 47/180 of 22 December 1992, 49/109 of 19 December 1994 and 50/100 of 20 December 1995 on the convening of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II),

Recognizing the important role of cities and urban areas in economic, political, social and cultural development, and stressing the need to address urgently and comprehensively the deteriorating conditions of shelter and human settlements in rural and urban areas,

Also recognizing the critical problems common to human settlements in the developing countries, including poverty, unemployment, social disintegration, inadequate shelter and lack of proper maintenance of urban and infrastructure and services,

Cognizant of the importance of maintaining the momentum already generated at the national, regional and international levels for the implementation of measures designed to alleviate the deteriorating living conditions of increasing populations in both urban and rural settlements,

Recognizing the interdependence of rural and urban development,

Having considered the report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)[1] and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of and follow-up to the Conference, including the role played by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements,[2]

Expressing its profound gratitude to the Government and people of Turkey for their support and for the facilities, staff and services placed at the disposal of the Conference and hospitality extended to the participants,

Also expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Secretary-General of the Conference and the staff of the Secretariat for the effective preparations and services provided for the Conference,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II),[1]

2. Endorses the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements[3] and the Habitat Agenda[4] adopted by the Conference on 14 June 1996;

3. Acknowledges with appreciation that the Conference provided a major opportunity to build upon the actions and commitments of previous United Nations conferences and summits;

4. Recognizes with satisfaction the active involvement in the Conference of all States and other relevant actors, and the innovative arrangements introduced at the Conference to forge partnerships among various actors;

5. Reaffirms the commitment to the full and progressive realization of the right to adequate housing, as provided for in international instruments, and in that context recognizes an obligation by Governments to enable people to obtain shelter and to protect and improve dwellings and neighbourhoods;

6. Recognizes that Governments have the primary responsibility for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, and further recognizes that the international community should support Governments in their efforts, by promoting international cooperation for, inter alia, the establishment of an open, equitable, cooperative and mutually beneficial international economic environment;

7. Calls upon all Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and other actors concerned with human settlements and urban management issues, such as local authorities, relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental

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[1] A/CONF.165/14.

[2] A/51/384.

[3] A/CONF.165/14, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[4] Ibid., annex II.

organizations, parliamentarians, the private sector, trade unions, academicians and other community groups, to implement, fully and effectively, the Habitat Agenda, and to give both the Habitat Agenda and the Istanbul Declaration the widest possible dissemination, and in that context, balanced attention to the best practices initiative;

8. Invites all Governments to further encourage and support all relevant actors of civil society, including the private sector, in the implementation and follow-up of the Habitat Agenda by establishing effective partnerships and by creating an appropriate framework, in accordance with their respective national conditions, to further facilitate and expedite such actors in addressing human settlements issues, particularly servicing, finance mobilization, the provision of adequate shelter and related areas, and in that process to emphasize the need to integrate the gender perspective;

9. Reaffirms that in formulating human settlements policies and strategies, all countries should recognize the interdependence of rural and urban areas and address the needs of both in a balanced manner;

10. Calls upon all Governments to establish or strengthen, as appropriate, participatory mechanisms for the implementation, assessment, review and follow-up of the Habitat Agenda and national plans of action;

11. Emphasizes the need for all countries and for the international community to promote at all levels an integrated and multidimensional approach to the implementation and follow-up of the Habitat Agenda;

12. Reaffirms that all States should exert concerted efforts to achieve the implementation of the Habitat Agenda through bilateral, subregional, regional and international cooperation, as well as through the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and that States may also convene bilateral, subregional and regional meetings and take other appropriate initiatives to contribute to the review and assessment of the progress made in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

13. Also reaffirms that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and relevant resolutions, including Assembly resolutions 48/162 and 50/227, and together with the Commission on Human Settlements, shall constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism to oversee the coordination of activities for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

14. Recommends that, at its special session to be convened from 23 to 27 June 1997 for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of Agenda 21, the Assembly give due attention to the issue of human settlements in the context of sustainable development;

15. Reaffirms that the General Assembly should consider holding a special session in the year 2001 for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), including the identification of obstacles, considering

further actions and initiatives, and that a decision on this matter should be taken at its fifty-second session;

16. Reaffirms that the Economic and Social Council may convene meetings of high-level representatives to promote international dialogue on the critical issues pertaining to adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development, as well as on policies for addressing them through international cooperation, and in this context, the Council may consider dedicating one high-level segment before the year 2001 to human settlements and the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, with the active involvement and participation of, inter alia, the specialized agencies, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund;

17. Emphasizes that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with their respective mandates, should review and strengthen the mandate of the Commission on Human Settlements, taking into account the Habitat Agenda, as well as the need for synergy with related commissions and conference follow-ups and for a system-wide approach to its implementation;

18. Requests the Commission on Human Settlements at its forthcoming session, in 1997, to review its programme of work in order to ensure an effective follow-up and implementation of the outcome of the Conference, in a manner consistent with the functions and contributions of other relevant organs of the United Nations system, and make recommendations thereon to the Economic and Social Council within the framework of the review of the activities of its subsidiary bodies;

19. Invites the Secretary-General to undertake in the light of the review of the mandate of the Commission on Human Settlements, a comprehensive and in-depth assessment, from within existing resources, of the Centre for Human Settlements with a view to its revitalization, to present terms of reference and a preliminary report on this assessment for the consideration of the Commission at its sixteenth session, and to make a final report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session;

20. Requests the Secretary-General, in accordance with paragraph 229 of the Habitat Agenda and in consultation with the Commission on Human Settlements, to ensure more effective functioning of the Centre by, inter alia, providing sufficient human and financial resources within the regular budget of the United Nations;

21. Requests the Commission on Human Settlements to review, at its sixteenth session, its working methods in order to involve in its work the representatives of local authorities or international associations of local authorities, as appropriate, and the relevant actors of civil society, particularly the private sector and non-governmental organizations, in the field of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development, taking into account the rules of procedure of the Commission on Human Settlements and the relevant provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31;

22. Decides that the Commission on Human Settlements, as a standing committee of the Economic and Social Council, should have a central role in monitoring, within the United Nations system, the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and advising the Council thereon;

23. Recommends that the Economic and Social Council, in the context of the overall review process of its subsidiary bodies, and within the context of the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227, should review the periodicity of the meetings of the Commission on Human Settlements, taking into account the need for full and effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

24. Reaffirms that the Commission on Human Settlements, in developing its work programme, should examine the Habitat Agenda and consider how to integrate in its programme of work the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), and should consider how it could further develop its catalytic role in promoting adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development;

25. Reaffirms also that the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements should be designated as a focal point for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

26. Requests the Secretary-General to include the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in the mandates of the existing inter-agency task forces of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to facilitate an integrated and coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

27. Acknowledges the importance of the regional and subregional activities undertaken during the preparations for the Conference, including the regional strategies, plans and declarations adopted as part of the preparatory process, and invites the regional commissions, other regional and subregional organizations and the regional development banks, to examine the results of the Conference within their respective mandates with a view to identifying the actions to be taken at the regional and subregional levels for the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;

28. Emphasizes that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should, where appropriate, promote subregional and regional cooperation in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, that the regional commissions, within their mandates and in cooperation with regional intergovernmental organizations and banks, could consider convening high-level meetings to review progress made in implementing the outcome of Habitat II, exchange views on their respective experiences, particularly on best practices, and adopt appropriate measures that such meetings could involve, as appropriate, the participation of the principal financial and technical institutions, and that the regional commissions should report to the Council on the outcome of such meetings;

29. Requests all the relevant United Nations organizations and specialized agencies to identify the specific actions that they will undertake within their mandates towards the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, and in that context invites them to inform the Administrative Committee on Coordination of their actions and to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session,

through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1997, on their specific plans and activities;

30. Invites the Bretton Woods institutions to be actively involved in the implementation and the follow-up to the Conference, and to enhance their cooperation with the United Nations system for that purpose;

31. Reaffirms that the demand for shelter and infrastructural services in human settlements is continuously increasing and that communities and countries, especially developing countries, have difficulty in mobilizing adequate financial resources to meet the rapidly rising costs of shelter, services and physical infrastructure, and reaffirms further that new and additional financial resources from various sources are necessary to achieve the goals of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements development in an urbanizing world, and that existing resources available to developing countries - public, private, multilateral, bilateral, domestic and external - need to be enhanced through appropriate and flexible mechanisms and economic instruments to support adequate shelter and sustainable human settlements development;

32. Stresses that the full and effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda, in particular in all developing countries, especially those in Africa and the least developed countries, will require the mobilization of additional financial resources from various sources at the national and international levels and more effective development cooperation in order to promote assistance for shelter and human settlements activities;

33. Invites all Governments and the international community to consider the role of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation in the follow-up of the Habitat Agenda and to consider the scope for providing further support for the Foundation in its activities, taking into account the need to continue to improve its effectiveness;

34. Requests the programmes and funds of the United Nations system and the regional commissions, consistent with their respective mandates, to fully support the effective implementation of the Habitat Agenda, particularly at the field level, as appropriate;

35. Also requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the present resolution;

36. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session a sub-item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)".